

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE  
WASHINGTON STATE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION  
February 15 & 16, 2005**

The regular meeting of the Washington State Transportation Commission was called to order at 9 A.M., on February 15, 2005 in Room 1D2 of the Transportation Building in Olympia, Washington.

Commissioners present at the meeting were: Chair Stedman, Ed Barnes, Elmira Forner, A. Michèle Maher, Dan O'Neal and Lucy Steers.

Chair Stedman noted that Commissioners Maher, Forner and Barnes attended an open house, February 14, 2005 in Port Angeles to discuss the closure of the graving dock site.

Commissioner O'Neal stated that the purpose of the Port Angeles meeting was to provide an open public forum where citizens could share their concerns on the closure of the graving dock site as a result of an archeological find. There were approximately two hundred in attendance at the meeting. Participants included tribal members, city government officials and community residents. Secretary MacDonald opened the discussion with an overview and explanation of what lead up the site closure. He expressed that there was a bit of friction between the community and the tribe while others attempted to smooth things over. The Commission attended the open house to make certain that the community understood why the closure took place. On a positive note the open house opened dialogue in the community.

Commissioner Maher commented that all in all she felt the community forum was a positive experience for the Commission and community.

Commissioner Barnes commented that the circumstances are unfortunate, but overall the tribe and the community seemed to have a positive experience at the open house.

Commissioner Forner commented that Secretary MacDonald provided an excellent overview of the issues. She noted that conversations with citizens indicated that there is concern with what will happen to the property as well as how the loss of jobs will impact the community.

Secretary MacDonald commented that the Commission going to Port Angeles was positive for the community. Although there was some tension and anger, fortunately it did not dominate the meeting. He expressed that feelings in Port Angeles run pretty high with the lack of communication between the tribe and the rest of the community. He noted that the community as a whole has not had a very successful run with government on other issues. One of the questions raised is where did the \$60 million dollars go. People want to know what is going to be done about getting the money back. He explained that \$4.5 million dollars is in the bank account of the Port Angeles Commission, and \$3.5 million dollars is with the tribe, and a substantial amount of the money went to payroll at the site. The majority of people do not feel that the money was wasted, but rather that the Department should have stayed and completed the job. There will be meetings scheduled in Port Angeles in the future.

Chair Stedman noted that he and Commission Administrator, Jennifer Ziegler, spent

approximately forty-five minutes with Governor Gregoire updating her on the status of the Port Angeles graving dock site.

Secretary MacDonald emphasized that the Department is organizing information and preparing a report on the Port Angeles graving dock site. He also noted that there are on-going discussions regarding consideration of a site to build the pontoons and anchors for the Hood Canal Bridge.

### **MINUTES APPROVAL**

***Commissioner Barnes moved, and Commissioner Maher seconded that Commission meeting minutes from September 15 & 16, 2004, October 20 & 21, 2004 and October 27, 2004 be approved. The motion was approved unanimously.***

### **WSDOT CENTENNIAL COMMEMORATION**

Deb Gregory, Assistant for Policy & Administration, provided a briefing regarding the Department's plans to celebrate and commemorate its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Preparations have been underway for over a year developing a kick-off event scheduled for March 15, 2005. Other items planned to mark this celebration will include a book entitled "*Moving Washington: A Timeline, Chronicling the First Century of the Washington State Department of Transportation, 1905-2004*", authored by Walt Crowley, Kit Oldman & The Historylink staff. Resolution 668 extending the Commission's congratulations to the Department's 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary was presented for approval.

***Commissioner Barnes moved, and Commissioner Maher seconded the approval of Resolution 668 extending the Transportation Commission's congratulations to the Department of Transportation in reaching its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The motion passed unanimously.***

### **2005 LEGISLATIVE SESSION UPDATE**

Paul Hammond, Chief of Staff, provided an update to the Commission regarding the status of 2005 legislation. Ms. Hammond shared that both Senate and House Transportation Committees are large groups with some new members this session. She noted that the Department utilized the Washington Transportation Plan folios to provide specific topic materials to the both Committees. The Department presented at risk structure presentations to both the Senate and House Committees stressing the importance of risks of the Alaskan Way Viaduct, the SR 520 Bridge, and the seismic vulnerability of those and other structures. She noted that the Department's bridge program is a very excellent program as far as taking care of current needs, even though it has fallen behind a bit with some of the budget cuts that have occurred over the years. The Alaskan Way Viaduct and the SR 520 Bridge are two exceptions where there are not enough available funds.

Don Griffith, Legislative Liaison, provided a briefing regarding the status of priority legislation. He explained that the State Transportation Governance House Bill 1642/Senate Bill 5513 transforms the Transportation Commission's roles and responsibilities.

The Department becomes an executive cabinet agency where the secretary is appointed by, and serves at the pleasure of the governor. He explained that the Commission's role would change substantially. The Legislative Transportation Committee would be dissolved, and the Transportation Performance Audit Board would be transferred to the Commission. At this time both bills are in committees. He provided an overview of legislation regarding budget and revenue issues; transportation planning and regional issues; highway operational issues; WSF issues; public transportation and rail issues; freight issues and aviation issues.

Bill Ford, WSDOT Budget Chief, commented that there are currently five budgets with a bill from the House and the Senate for each one that essentially read the same. The budgets that the Department has interest in have been to hearings and are in work sessions. He noted that Governor Locke's transportation budget is not identical to the one that the Department requested. He indicated that both Houses' are making progress on the transportation budget. The supplemental budget has not had much activity and may or may not be wrapped into the regular budget. A major change in the budget is that compensation adjustments are in the transportation budget and not in the general fund budget. The Department will need to figure out the adjustments at a later date. The capital budget has two reappropriations in both the Senate and House version for the Port of Everett satellite barge project and the Columbia River dredging. Both of these bills are on close watch by the Department.

#### **PORT OF SEATTLE BRIEFING**

Mark Reis, Managing Director, Seattle-Tacoma International Airport, provided a presentation to the Commission regarding Sea-Tac Airport issues and trends. Although the volume of traffic at the airport has increased since 2000 there has been nearly a twenty percent decrease in operations. In summary, when you compare the year 2000 to 2004, there are one and a half percent more enplanements than passengers, and twenty percent fewer operations (take offs and landings). The load factors are much higher and the airlines are substituting larger aircraft and fewer flights as a part of their efforts to achieve profitability. He explained that at some point airlines would need to increase airfares in order to make a profit. Low cost carriers now dominate and drive the airline industry in the United States. In the future it is predicated that the U.S. airline industry will lose somewhere in the neighborhood of \$5-6 to six billion dollars, as opposed to turning the corner as originally predicted.

Mr. Reis provided an overview of the airport capital programs projected spending plans through 2008. It is projected that this year there will \$540 million spent on the airport. The ten-year program integrates about one hundred thirty separate projects with the last element being the completion of the third runway in late 2008. Vision 2021 is a one-terminal solution that will include light rail extension to the airport by the end of 2009. There will also be route alignments between lanes of airport access to the freeway and pedestrian connections to the terminal. The airport will coordinate with the Department of Transportation, Puget Sound Regional Council and local cities on future highway improvements.

#### **SR 100 SPUR TURNBACK, SR 500 REROUTING, AND SR 501 PARTIAL ABANDONMENT**

Don Wagner, Regional Administrator, Southwest Region, provided a brief summary

regarding SR 100, SR 500 rerouting, and the partial abandonment of SR 501. He explained that if a new roadway is to become a State Route, it is subject to a thorough review by the Transportation Improvement Board (TIB). Appropriate changes to state law would be developed as a result of the TIB review and then recommended to the Legislature. In order to implement changes such as these may impact operations within the Department. Due to growth needs of the community the state would take over a new roadway that is access controlled, and the local jurisdiction would receive a roadway that serves as a local arterial. The Department is requesting the Commission's approval to continue working with the localities involved to finalize details on the transfer of SR 100 Spur and SR 500, and to abandon the described portion of SR 501.

Aaron Butters, Manager, Systems Analysis and Program Development, noted that it has been several years since the Department has rerouted a city street to a county road. RCW 36.75.090 provides the Commission the authority to provide direction for changes on SR 100 and SR 501. RCW 47.28.010 provides the Commission the authority to provide direction for changes on SR 500. An overview of the specifics and legal descriptions of each route were provided.

***It was moved by Commissioner Maher, and seconded by Commissioner Barnes to approve Resolution 669 directing the Department to work with local entities to enact the Route Jurisdiction Transfer of SR 100 Spur and SR 500, and to abandon the described portion of SR 501. The motion passed unanimously.***

#### **GRAY NOTEBOOK QUARTERLY UPDATE**

Daniela Bremmer, Director of Strategic Assessment, opened the presentation with a brief overview of the Gray Notebook.

Robin Hartsell, Performance Reporting Manager, Strategic Planning and Programming, provided a high-clipped overview of the basic navigation of the Gray Notebook. He shared information regarding recordable injuries, prevention activities and safety training for maintenance workers. The Department has submitted an expenditure plan to the Legislature for the first six quarters of the biennium totaling approximately \$838 million for Improvement and Preservation Programs, noting that there is a seven percent variance as of the end of the sixth quarter for the Highway Construction Program that is divided between the Improvement and Preservation Program.

The special features section of the Gray Notebook contains an overview of photo enforcement. Mr. Hartsell explained that the use of cameras to capture red light violations is beginning to catch on around the United States as an effective means of deterring illegal and dangerous driver behavior at signaled intersections. He explained that the City Of Lakewood has experienced fewer violations and fewer collisions as a result of the use of photo enforcement.

John Milton, Assistant State Design Engineer, provided an update regarding highway safety improvement projects throughout the state. He explained that the Department is continuing to track twenty-one safety projects to determine if there is a reduction in the number of and severity of traffic collisions. Preliminary results indicated that for the twenty-one projects, the average number of collisions per year for the projects combined was reduced by thirty

seven percent. The Department will continue to monitor these projects and collect data for the next three years to provide an after analysis. He noted that pedestrian safety fatalities are fourteen percent of all transportation related fatalities. Most pedestrian fatalities occur on arterial roads. The Department is seeking to improve pedestrian crossings and address driver behavior.

Scott Zeller, Acting State Traffic Engineer, explained that the Department working in conjunction with the Traffic Safety Commission "*Click it or Ticket*" Program and the Washington State Patrol's primary seatbelt enforcement law has resulted in fatalities declining over the last ten years. It is also noted that the enforcement and seatbelt law may have a positive effect on reducing the number of drinking driver-involved collisions.

Pat Morin, Manager of Systems Analysis and Priority Development, provided an update regarding highway pavement conditions. The Department maintains 19,970 lane miles of highways composed of three major pavement types; chip seal, hot mix asphalt and Portland Cement Concrete. According to a 2003 survey, pavement condition ratings indicate that poor pavement conditions are on the increase. The Department is currently examining the causes for this increase. He outlined the Department's plan to continued remedy of this situation. Nadarajah Sivanewaren, Pavement Management Engineer, explained the differences between the three types of pavement.

Barbara Ivanov, Director, Freight Strategy and Policy, provided an update regarding freight growth performance measures. She noted that freight is growing about two to four times as fast as the state's population growth. This trend has held fairly strong over the last decade. Globalization has been a huge driver in this aspect, secondly many Washington companies are moving towards cost cutting inventory reduction strategies, and thirdly there is an advance in available technology that has allowed for a shift change in the way freight has done business in the last decade. There is a limited amount of data with regards to this issue, but forecasts predict that cargo volumes will continue to grow in the next twenty years. A rail capacity study indicates that the fastest growing segments of marine cargo move primarily by rail. A primary concern is severe weather conditions that close I-90. The I-90 corridor is Eastern Washington's lifeline to the Central Puget Sound. The Department recognizes that these closures at Snoqualmie Pass remain a major concern in the freight community. As part of the solution the Department is utilizing highway de-icers to help keep truckers safe. Automatic de-icers detect dangerous winter road conditions and spray anti-icing chemicals on the roadway using built-in sprinkler systems.

Rico Baroga, Manager, Maintenance Accountability Process, provided an update regarding the Department's highway maintenance activities. The Department is currently focusing on mobility and movement by prioritizing activities. He noted that movable and floating bridge operations accounted for a drop in targeted service level B in 2004. He provided an overview of the typical costs of state highway maintenance per year and per car for fiscal year 2004.

The Department has rolled out a local integrated vegetation management plan. The focus is to manage vegetation and reduce herbicide use. Area specific plans with public participation are the main vehicle for accomplishing herbicide management. The Department has contracted with the University of Washington to research alternatives for managing vegetation at the pavement edge. In closing he outlined the Department's participation in

monitoring and preventing West Nile Virus.

Megan White, Director, Environmental Services, provided a briefing regarding water quality, wetlands and overall environmental compliance. She briefly summarized the Department's effectiveness in managing and removing pollutants from stormwater. The Department will continue to monitor and seek the best approach to minimizing pollutants. Another aspect of water quality is erosion control. It is a major component of the Department's program to help protect water quality by utilizing project inspection in order to determine the best course of action to prevent erosion. She noted that the Department is mitigating for unavoidable wetlands loss with replacement wetlands to address an executive order, which mandates that the actions of state agencies result in no net loss of wetlands. Transportation projects create unavoidable wetland impacts; therefore, wetlands are enhanced, restored, created or preserved to achieve the no net loss policy. An Environmental Management System is utilized to help support environmental efforts in every day operations. The Department self-monitors non-compliance events, and is proactive by providing training programs and regular performance reporting, in order to ensure fulfillment of the Department's environmental obligations.

Greg Selstead, Director, Project Control and Reporting, provided an overview of projected project advertisements biennium to date. He noted that there were twelve projects delayed or deferred as a result of environmental permitting challenges, right of way acquisition issues, stormwater mitigation and the consolidation of projects for efficiency.

John Conrad, Assistant Secretary, Engineering and Regional Operations, opened the Beige Page presentation providing project highlights and accomplishments. The presentation focused on project delivery resulting from the Legislature's passing of the 2004 Supplemental Transportation Budget. There were thirty-eight projects advertised and awarded from the 2003 Transportation Funding Package "Nickel Funds". He highlighted the I-5 to Pierce County line to Tukwila project explaining that the project adds an HOV lane south to the county line, which will also address rough pavement issues. Bidding opens for the SR 240/182 to Columbia Center Interchange where additional lanes to the interchange will be added. A recent project award was on the north/south corridor in Spokane, which is the next phase of Francis Avenue to Farwell. He noted that HOV construction is underway and on target on both sides of the Tacoma Narrows Bridge. Mr. Conrad and Paula Hammond, Chief of Staff, provided an overview of several projects up for proposed adjustments to delivery planning.

Jeff Caldwell, Transportation Funds Manager, provided an overview of revenue assumptions underlying the 2003 Transportation Funding Package and the Ten-Year Transportation Plan.

### **PROPOSED TRANSFER OF SPENDING ALLOCATION**

Greg Selstead, Director, Project Control and Reporting, briefed the Commission regarding the proposal to transfer spending allocations for highway and ferry projects on the 2003 Transportation Project New Law List. Mr. Selstead requested that the Commission make a formal adjustment to the projects that have been reported on.

These adjustments will be included in the Capital Improvement and Preservation Program update that will be submitted to the Legislature.

Chair Stedman expressed concerns regarding projected spending levels. Mr. Selstead responded that at this time delivery of a project might have significant issues that may escalate costs, budget or schedule in the future. It is what is known today that determines delivery.

***It was moved by Commissioner Barnes and seconded by Commissioner Maher to approve the proposed transfer of spending on highway projects for the quarter ending December 1, 2004. The motion was approved unanimously.***

### **CONGESTION RELIEF ANALYSIS**

Michael Cummings, Manager, Urban Planning Office, provided an update regarding the major findings of Phase one, of the Congestion Relief Analysis for Puget Sound, Spokane and Vancouver urban areas. The analysis was conducted to fulfill the requirements of ESHB 1163 and ESHB 2474. Phase one takes a global look at the transportation systems in the three major urban areas and Phase two will look at specific strategies at the corridor level focusing on central Puget Sound. Highlights and major findings of Phase one conclude that Washington State will continue to grow at a rapid pace adding about two million people by year 2025. Nearly seventy percent of this population growth will occur within the three major urban areas. As a result of growth, travel delay will increase by three to four times in each one of the areas.

The analysis looked at a range of transportation planning scenarios including single mode approaches, mixed mode strategies and congestion pricing. In summary Phase one indicated that: 1) congestion can be relieved by building highways, but the cost impacts will be very high; 2) massive transit expansion can serve a large number of trips in the heavily traveled corridors during peak commuting periods; but transit does little to reduce congestion; 3) congestion pricing, or roadway tolling, shows significant potential to reduce congestion; 4) the most practical approach for fighting the growing demand-capacity imbalance may lie in targeted strategic investments guided by a long-range corridor vision; 5) Puget Sound system efficiency measures, particularly a HOT lane network concept holds promise. In Phase two the next steps would be to focus on two important components: 1) improve the regional models to better reflect peak spreading and mode shift in responding to changes in policy (i.e. pricing) and/or transportation supply; 2) develop and analyze two to three additional transportation scenarios, focusing on evaluating pricing and managed lanes. Phase two of the study is currently under scoping and contract negotiations.

### **WASHINGTON TRANSPORTATION PLAN WORKSHOP**

Paula Hammond, Chief of Staff, shared that the Department is moving forward with next phase of the Washington Transportation Plan (WTP). The Department would like to focus on current policies, federal and state laws, as well as ask the Commission for direction in how transportation investments are to be made.

Elizabeth Robbins, Manager, Policy Development and Regional Coordination, explained that the purpose of today's discussion is to resume workshop discussions regarding the Washington Transportation Plan's second phase. Ms. Robbins noted that today's presentation would focus on three of the nine-targeted areas of the WTP.

Ms. Robbins explained that the Department has direction in federal, state and Commission policy to emphasize system preservation that applies to rail service and preservation, and corridor preservation projects. Each county transportation authority submits its Rail Fixed Guideway System Safety and Security Program Plan to the Department. Emphasizing traveler safety and security as a primary consideration in planning, designing, constructing, maintaining and operating all transportation systems. The state has a role in transportation access services that connect communities, and policy is needed to provide direction on what level of transportation service should be provided. The Department requests the Commission's concurrence in these guiding principles and those areas where it has been identified that there is a gap in Commission policy.

## **PRESERVATION**

### **Airport Land Use**

John Sibold, Director, WSDOT Aviation, stated that there is a land use program in place in Aviation that provides guidance and technical assistance to jurisdictions across the state. As jurisdictions develop their land use policies the Department provides the tools to assist them in protecting their airports, but it is up to the local jurisdictions to develop their own policies. The Department is not an enforcement agency. Encroachment is a problem with the aviation system and unprotected airports. The Department should be proactive in monitoring small communities in the future to insure that they are enforcing their own policies. Economic developers pressure airports because of the undeveloped space adjacent to airports. Development can directly affect the airports ability to operate and meet future transportation expansion. The Department recommends that policy be updated to include a monitoring aspect. It is now understood that there needs to be a national policy or guidance to protect airports as an essential facility as described in the Growth Management Act.

### **Short-line Railroad Strategy**

Judy Giniger, Director, Public Transportation and Rail, briefed the Commission regarding the preservation of short-line railroads. There is policy in place to preserve and restore rail corridors and structures, as well as support branch lines, short lines and main lines. The Department focused on short lines primarily because this has been the Legislature's focus. This policy does not have a strategy for prioritizing needs. The Department faces rail abandonment issues as a result of limited funds that have been directed to small economic development projects. Many short-line railroads have large backlogs of track repairs that will need to be addressed in the years ahead.

It is proposed that a track conditions inventory be prepared, along with an economic analysis of the freight rail system, and a preservation analysis of the state's freight rail system. The proposal is for the Commission to revisit the policy, and to seek advice from the Department and Freight Policy Advisory Committee to clarify short-line railroads policy direction.



### **Highway Pavements-Concrete Rehabilitation**

Aaron Butters, Manager, Program Development, provided a briefing regarding the preservation of highway pavement. The condition of concrete highway pavement in the state is in decline and will be expensive and inconvenient to repair. The backlog of these repairs results in a higher cost of replacing the concrete panels and performing dowel bar retrofits. The Department's materials lab has surveyed all lanes on the state highway system and made a recommendation on the necessary repairs or rehabilitation based on priority. It has been determined to maintain hot mix asphalt pavements at the lowest life cycle cost. The Department anticipates that past-due repairs will be completed by the 2007-09 biennium. If adequate pavement structure exists, some of the hot mix asphalt routes could be converted to chip seal pavement for an added cost benefit while maintaining the lowest life cycle cost. The will be further analysis by the Department. The problem with chip seal pavement is that it requires periodic resurfacing to keep the surface smooth and safe to prevent failure of the underlying sub-surface. It is proposed that chip seal pavement be maintained at the lowest life cycle cost methodology. Heavy truck traffic at intersections results in ruts that require strengthening of hot mix asphalt and chip seal pavement. It is proposed that hot mix asphalt be replaced with Portland Cement Concrete and chip seal pavements be replaced with hot mix asphalt. This proposal lowers the cost of repeated ACP paving by increasing the life of the pavement with Portland Cement Concrete.

### **Highway Structures-Replace Major Seismically Vulnerable Structures**

Mr. Butters briefed the Commission regarding the replacement of major seismically vulnerable, aging structures. Experts have determined that a moderate earthquake will take the Alaskan Way Viaduct out of service permanently in the next ten years. The proposed project would replace the existing Viaduct with a tunnel through central downtown Seattle. The project preserves the capacity and safety of the system, as well as promoting long-term economic vitality for the port and the region. The SR 520 Bridge is at the end of its useful life and is at risk from both earthquakes and storms. Replacement of the bridge will complete the missing link in the King County HOV system, as well as provide capacity and safety improvements to the system.

### **Modernization of Narrow Bridges and Approaches**

Preservation and modernization of narrow bridges and approaches also needs to be addressed. The proposal is to replace bridges that have reached the end of their effective service life and to realign roadway approaches. The benefits will be a reduction in the risk of collisions and maintenance costs.

### **Concrete Deck Rehabilitation**

Preservation of deteriorated pre-1980 concrete bridge decks is needed as a result of excessive wheel rutting in concrete overlays. The benefits would be preventing continued deterioration of the bridge deck and lower maintenance costs.

### **Painting Steel Bridges**

There is a current backlog of fifty steel bridges that need to be repainted in order to prevent premature corrosion and extend the bridge's service life.

### **Scour Damaged Bridges**

There were thirty-five bridges identified in 2004 that need repair as a result of scour damage to their foundations. The benefits of implementing this proposal would reduce the risk of

catastrophic bridge collapse.

### **Bridge Retrofits**

Substandard bridges that were built in 1940-1980 are susceptible to or have been damaged as a result of seismic activity. The proposal is to retrofit bridge superstructures in order to reduce the risk of catastrophic bridge collapse.

### **Highway And Other Facilities**

There is a need to create an inventory and condition assessment of highway other facilities that may have major electrical and drainage issues as a result of aging. It is proposed that electrical and drainage issues be addressed in order to meet a lowest life-cycle cost. Safety rest areas need refurbishment/rehabilitation. It is proposed that buildings be replaced or repaired as needed. Sites must be updated to meet regulatory requirements, peak demand as well as provide convenient locations to rest with safe access and amenities.

### **Unstable Slopes**

Unstable slope failures can impede traffic movement by blocking the roadway, or worst-case scenario, injury or death from falling debris. Repair of high-risk slopes are nearly completed. It is proposed that other unstable slopes be prioritized based on risk. This program protects people from unstable slopes that have potential failure.

### **Facilities Replacement**

Ron Niemi, Manager, Facilities Planning & Operations, briefed the Commission regarding the Department's facility replacement needs. Essential facilities, such as, maintenance facilities, mountaintop radio communications sites, regional administration sites, engineering and special maintenance hubs are deteriorating. Many of these facilities are functionally obsolete and others require additions to remain functional. The proposal is to increase investment in facilities replacement and additions. Investment is based on a payback analysis that considers the cost. The benefit would be to save taxpayers dollars and enhance Department efficiency and program delivery by consolidating workforces and functions. As well the investment would build equity instead of paying for leases.

### **City Roadway Pavement**

Kathleen Davis, Director, Highways and Local Programs, briefed the Commission regarding the preservation of pavement in local cities. She explained that the Department has been working very closely with cities and counties, the Association of Washington Cities, the County Road Administration Board, the Transportation Improvement Board and the Freight Mobility Investment Board. City and county funding does not keep up with preservation needs. Neither cities nor counties have dedicated preservation or maintenance accounts or flexibility with gas tax revenue.

There are three proposals for cities: 1) establishing small city pavement program for cities with a population of under ten thousand; 2) increasing direct distribution to cities; 3) remove restrictions on how cities allocate their gas tax to allow for flexibility. For counties there are two issues: 1) increase direct distribution; 2) work with four counties to address their ferry preservation needs.

### **Local Bridges**

Short spans or bridges less than twenty feet in length and high cost bridges are two categories

of bridges that are not currently being adequately preserved. Both cities and counties report that significant preservation is needed. It is proposed that a grant program be established to replace or rehabilitate bridges less than twenty feet. A grant program would be established to prioritize high cost structures using the lower sufficiency ratings. The benefits would be improved system efficiency and the restoration of streams and improvement of fish passage.

### **Ferry Terminals And Vessels**

Bill Greene, Budget Director, WSF, provided a briefing to the Commission regarding WSF preservation needs. He explained that in 1996 WSF began developing a life cycle based approach to preservation. In 2001, the Office of Financial Management conducted an audit of WSF's life cycle based approach to the current preservation decision making process for capital investment and determined that it was an effective and sound process. It was determined that the current condition of ferry terminals is below the legislatively set standard, primarily due to an aging trestle infrastructure inventory that needs replacement. There are two approaches to preserving assets; one is the life cycle approach; the other is the replacement of the entire terminal or vessel. It is proposed that by 2015 WSF will meet the Legislature's system-wide preservation performance standard. In order to meet this standard 823 vessel systems will require replacement. The Legislature is supporting WSF's preservation efforts with funding during the 2003-15 biennia. Benefits of the proposal would be to protect public investments, service delivery, the quality of service and environmental protection.

### **Public Transportation-Vehicle Replacement**

Ms. Giniger provided a briefing regarding the need to replace public transportation vehicles statewide. She noted that the goal is to offer safe and reliable transportation services across the state, and to maintain the current transit levels. As population grows transit services must keep up with the need. The proposal is to provide grant funds to transit agencies for vehicles, such as buses; Para transit vans and other vehicles. The benefits/impacts of implementing the proposal is maintaining service levels that are vital to our communities and highway efficiencies.

### **Park & Ride Lots**

Ms. Giniger provided a briefing regarding the preservation of park & ride lots. There are 296 park and ride lots in the state. The Department owns or leases nearly half of the lots. The Department does not maintain the lots, which leaves many with failing pavement surfaces. The proposal is to develop a park & ride lot program to maintain existing lots and fund the development of new ones. It is much less expensive to preserve the existing lots rather than siting building replacement facilities. The Commission needs to consider park & ride lot policy development.

### **Airport Pavement Preservation**

Mr. Sibold provided an overview airport pavement conditions within the aviation system. About twelve percent of airports are in the poor category, with fourteen percent in complete failure. He pointed out that there is a need for funding to maintain airport pavement. Through analysis a true picture of what is necessary to maintain the system will be brought forward in the 2007-09 biennium.

### **Tribal Transportation Planning Initiative**

Colleen Jollie, Tribal Liaison, WSDOT, explained that tribes have been working towards

enhancing their transportation planning administrative capacity. While it is necessary for tribes to move in this direction it has not entirely occurred. The Bureau of Indian Affairs has agreed to provide funds for Northwest tribes, along with matching funds from the Department, to support local transportation planning. This proposal will address the need for tribes to be able to more closely coordinate with state and county jurisdictions regarding data collection and other transportation needs and solutions. The increased administrative and technical expertise will help with transportation planning and key problem areas.

### **Safety Data and Sharing Strategy**

Sandra Pedigo-Marshall, Manager, Performance Measures & Planning, explained that data is very important when determining what should be done about safety issues. Data quality and data sharing is most important in the area of traffic safety. The Traffic Records Committee has developed a strategic plan that recommends a series of seven goals. The benefits of sharing data will identify safety problems and concerns. Motorcycle safety is a major concern with the increase in motorcycle traffic deaths in the state.

Steve Lind, Acting Director, Traffic Safety Commission, shared that motorcycle fatalities are a problem nationwide. Data indicates that motorcycle registration increased by twelve percent between 2003 and 2004. The proposal is to recommend more stringent motorcycle license testing, support stricter helmet laws and lower blood alcohol content level for motorcycle drivers. Behavioral Programs addressing driving under the influence (DUI) and aggressive drivers are being proposed. These programs if implemented would reduce overall fatal and disabling collisions. The Department plans to contract with a motorcycle crash reconstructionist specialist to review motorcycle fatalities between 1996-2004 in order to collect definitive data. The Traffic Safety Commission requests the Commissions support with traffic safety issues.

### **PUBLIC AND LEGISLATOR COMMENT PERIOD**

Representative Jim Buck, 24<sup>th</sup> District, expressed his displeasure with the way the Port Angeles graving dock site abandonment situation has been handled. He noted that additional resources were offered to assist with the tribe, but received no response was received. He shared that he is not certain of how to go about finding resolution to the situation. He shared he feels that this same issue will arise at other project locations and must be addressed innovatively.

Chair Stedman responded that the Commission understands Representative Buck's comments, but decisions were made after consultation with the Governor and U.S. Senator Cantwell. The Commission's first obligation is to insure that the Hood Canal Bridge is safe for public use.

Representative Buck responded that there was not consultation with the Legislature before the decision was made.

Victor Gray, member of, the Alaskan Way Viaduct Preservation Society, expressed his concerns regarding replacement of the Viaduct. He noted that he feels the Viaduct can be saved for a lesser cost. He proposed that bracing and other reinforcements be added at specific locations to prevent damage from future earthquakes.

Secretary MacDonald commented that following extensive review of the proposal it was

determined that this technique is not suitable for the structure.

Marilyn Omev, member of, the Vashon Island Community Council, and the Vashon Ferry Advisory Committee, shared her concerns regarding the process of Ferry Tariff public hearings. She expressed her concerns regarding increases in ferry fares. She also shared that she feels the Blue Ribbon Commission's recommendations regarding farebox recovery need to be reexamined.

Chair Stedman commented that the Commission considers public comment when adopting ferry fares.

Gene Hoglund shared his concerns regarding the tunnel alternative for the Alaskan Way Viaduct.

### **2006 FEDERAL APPROPRIATIONS REQUESTS**

Larry Ehl, Federal Liaison, WSDOT, provided the Commission with an update regarding federal transportation funding. He noted that Congress is starting over in with reauthorizing federal surface transportation laws. They are collecting requests for project funding that might be included in the new law. Due to funding issues it is unlikely that House members will receive additional funds to earmark. Most Congressional offices have indicated they are unlikely to deviate from their original earmark list. As a result of Senators not identifying earmarks, the Department may add some requests to the Senate request list to allow additional flexibility in selecting projects. The federal fiscal year 2006 appropriations process has begun, and the Department will submit its requests in early March 2005.

### **SECRETARY'S REPORT**

Secretary MacDonald shared that the working relationship between the Department, the Commission and the new Governor seems to be off to a good start. He explained that he is very pleased that the Department's testimony to the Legislature was well received.

Secretary MacDonald provided an overview regarding Sound Transit issues. He noted that a group of citizen panelists have been appointed to analyze efficiencies of different transportation modes. The output is expected to provide an independent review of critical assessment questions, guide plan preparation, and assure that transportation plan assumptions are appropriate and reasonable. He briefly commented on the Link Light Rail Program and the Express Bus Program, noting that the important thing to remember is that the Department is Sound Transit's private sector partner in a public/private partnership.

He moved on to review the status of WSF's Ten-Year Passenger Strategy Report submitted to the Legislature. The report concludes that the state does not have any particular interest in operating passenger-only ferry service in the south sound. Essentially the plan is to find the most effective way of organizing service and make a long-term commitment, whether it is WSF, alternative operators or a combination of both providing service to the public. Secretary MacDonald shared that the Department is dealing with controversy regarding construction closure of the Hood Canal Bridge. Due to summer construction the bridge will need to be closed for seventy-eight hours twice this summer. This is not an easy task to undertake considering the contractors schedule. The closures were scheduled to take place

on weekends, but residents of the Olympic Peninsula are expressing concerns due to holiday tourism. The Department is working with the public and the contractor to determine suitable closure dates and times.

John Conrad, Assistant Secretary, Engineering and Regional Operations, noted that the Department met with the Hood Canal Bridge expert review panel regarding contracting construction of the bridge anchors and pontoons. The Department presented the project background to the panel suggesting negotiation of a change order with the current contractor to construct anchors and pontoons at another site, or construct anchors and pontoons at another site to be selected by the Department under a new bid, or put out a bid and let a new contractor choose a site and permit it. The panel advised the Department that negotiations with the current contractor should be first priority. In the event that an agreement cannot be reached with the current contractor the panel recommended that the Department plan to open the project for bids. The contractor is very interested in continuing the work. The most critical issue is finding a new site to construct both the anchors and the pontoons. If at all possible the Department will have the anchors and pontoons constructed in Port Angeles. Partnering meetings are being scheduled to seek resolution to this issue.

### **TRANSIT ASSET MAINTENANCE PLANS**

Judy Giniger, Director, Public Transportation and Rail, explained that, as a condition of funding, statute requires that the Department submit a maintenance and preservation management plan to the Commission for approval. The plan must include an inventory of assets and contain a maintenance and preservation plan based on lowest lifecycle methodology. There are twenty-eight transit systems in the state broken down by seven large urban systems, nine small urban systems and twelve rural systems.

Barb Savary, Transit Safety and Asset Management Specialist, explained that elements have already been defined for maintaining assets. The Department will review and insure that transit system plans meet the requirements before requesting the Commission's certification. The Department, upon approval from the Commission, will work towards being prepared to provide training and technical assistance to transit agency personnel.

***It was moved by Commissioner Maher and seconded by Commissioner Steers to approve the Department's request to move forward with the Transit Asset Management Plan. The motion passed unanimously.***

The Commission meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m., on February 16, 2005.

**WASHINGTON STATE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION**

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DAN O'NEAL, Chair

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RICHARD FORD, Vice-Chair  
(Absent)

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EDWARD BARNES, Member

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KAREN BONAUDI, Member  
(Not a member at this meeting)

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ROBERT S. DISTLER, Member  
(Not a member at this meeting)

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ELMIRA FORNER, Member

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DALE STEDMAN, Member

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DOUGLAS MACDONALD, Ex-Officio Member  
Secretary of Transportation

ATTEST:

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REEMA GRIFFITH, Administrator

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DATE OF APPROVAL